

**TOWNSHIP OF OCEAN
COUNTY OF OCEAN
May 13, 2010**

**JOINT MEETING WITH TOWNSHIP OF OCEAN BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING AGENDA
MAY 13, 2010, 7:00 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

3. PROVISIONS OF THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS LAW

STATEMENT: Pursuant to the provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this meeting was properly provided by sending copies of the Notice of Meeting to two newspapers, The Press of Atlantic City and the Asbury Park Press. The Notice was posted at the office of the Township Clerk and on the bulletin board in the Administration Building.

4. ROLL CALL OF OFFICIALS PRESENT:

TOWNSHIP OF OCEAN COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
MAYOR JOSEPH LACHAWIEC X
DEPUTY MAYOR TREDY X
COMMITTEEWOMAN WETTER X

5. TOWNSHIP OF OCEAN BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS:

RITA SWEENEY, BOARD PRESIDENT X
JOSEPH TOMCZUK, VICE PRESIDENT X
MICHAEL CORT X
ANNETTE STRIDE Abs
JACQUELINE VON SCHMIDT X

6. OPENING STATEMENT BY MAYOR JOSEPH LACHAWIEC

The school budget was defeated by the voters on April 20, 2010. The School Board presented a budget to the Township Committee. The Township Committee is obligated, under law, to determine a final amount that is necessary to provide a thorough and efficient education for the students. On April 27, 2010, the Township Committee held a meeting with the Board of Education. On April 29, 2010, a public meeting was held, at which many people testified. A final determination will be made tonight. The defeated budget included a tax increase of \$132,561. Township Committee Resolution 2010-199 reduces that amount to zero through the

following adjustments. The custodial salaries will be reduced by \$14,850. Kindergarten teacher salaries will be reduced by \$9,600. Grade 1-5 teacher salaries will be reduced by \$53,687. Grade 6 teacher salaries will be reduced by \$10,192. Technology Coordinator salaries will be reduced by \$36,000. Secretary and clerical salaries will be reduced by \$3,790. There will be savings in utilities and materials in the amount of \$19,460 and a reduction in health benefits of \$25,306. The total gross reductions total \$172, 885. Due to unemployment compensation, there will be an increase of \$40,324. The total net reductions are \$132,561. The Township Committee proposes the General Fund Tax Levy of \$9,418,649 and Debt Service Tax Levy of \$409,101 for a total Tax Levy of \$9,827,750. The tax rate thus being .7342 cents per \$100. An average home assessed at \$292,000 will pay the same amount in school taxes as last year at \$2,146 per annum.

7. DISCUSSION OF DEFEATED SCHOOL BUDGET AMENDMENTS

MOTION TO OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT moved by Committeewoman Wetter, seconded by Deputy Mayor Tredy.

Roll Call: Wetter: Yes, Tredy: Yes, Lachawiec: Yes

Chris West, 18 Bayview Drive, inquired how much income the town is getting from the Shop Rite or Coastal Redevelopment, who is registered in Delaware.

Township Attorney McGuckin stated many corporations who operate in the state of New Jersey are incorporated in other states if the business climate for state and tax purposes are more beneficial. Any corporation who does business in New Jersey, in this case it is a limited liability corporation, has to be registered and authorized to transact business in New Jersey, as of this entity. The only way that project would have moved forward is if there was a payment in lieu of taxes as opposed to regular taxes. Payment would be required under state statute. There was a master redevelopment plan that the public fully supported and went with the pilot program. The Township Committee provided that pilot payment, due to there being no school children resulting from the commercial development. The project itself would not have been built without a pilot payment. That was debated approximately four years ago.

Mr. West inquired how much is the developer paying the township.

Township Administrator Breeden stated it is in the budget under anticipated revenues.

Mr. West stated there is a blank space for money to go to the school district.

Mayor Lachawiec stated typically the taxes are shared with the school district. In that case, under a pilot program, it is not shared. That is why it is blank.

Mr. West stated the township should put something toward the school district.

Mayor Lachawiec stated the town voted and defeated that suggestion.

Christine Presti, 206 3rd Street, inquired if there are full teaching positions disappearing or was it salary decreases.

Rita Sweeney stated the school board could not answer that question at this time.

Basil Shehady, 99 Railroad Avenue, inquired if the township reviewed the budget and came up with the best numbers it could.

Mayor Lachawiec stated yes.

Mr. Shehady inquired how the Township Committee decided on the 50% cut of the total.

Mayor Lachawiec stated it is a full cut in the amount above zero. Mr. Shehady is thinking of the minimum amount that could be cut for an efficient education. That was considered and rejected. The Township Committee decided on a \$132,000 cut and a zero tax increase, rather than a tax reduction.

Mr. Shehady inquired what the Committee's decision was based on, to cut certain areas.

Township Administrator Breeden stated the maximum amount the Township Committee could have cut was \$219,760. The Committee elected not to cut that amount, but amounts sufficient to get the tax rate down to zero. That amount is \$132,561. The Township Committee gave that number to the Board of Education. The Board of Education came up with the series of individual cuts that amounted to \$132,561.

Township Attorney McGuckin stated the Township Committee has to certify a final tax levy, hopefully tonight. If the Board of Education accepts that, that amount is put into the budget. The Board of Education may then revise their budget as they see fit.

Anastasia Shehady, 99 Railroad, stated after school programs that teach kids important things is being cut off because the budget is being cut. Education that is needed in the school is not going to be provided.

Mayor Lachawiec stated the Township Committee directed the school district not to cut the after-school or late bus programs.

Sharon Lautner, 123 Marine Road, stated the Board decides where the money gets cut. The reality of a \$132,000 cut is after school programs will be cut. The Board will not be offering as many clubs next year. Four out of five districts voted for the budget. One district voted no. Forty-one votes is not a mandate.

Mayor Lachawiec stated the budget was defeated under the laws of the state of New Jersey. It cannot be debated whether the budget should have or could have been defeated. It was defeated and that is the end of it.

Ms. Lautner stated a \$132,000 cut is an overreaction to the 41 votes that defeated this budget. It is way too much. Ms. Lautner asks the board to look at this budget and not take away so much money, as this will hurt the children.

Deputy Mayor Tredy stated the numbers are not necessarily of the Township Committee. This is a joint venture with the school board. It would have been much easier if the schoolteachers took less of a raise.

Ms. Lautner stated this board and all of the teachers have been taking a hit for years and is one of the lowest in the state and county. The school district does not have excessive salaries whatsoever.

Deputy Mayor Tredy thinks the teachers should make twice as much. That is not reality. In order to solve the problem, the Township Committee and the School Board came up with this compromise.

Mayor Lachawiec inquired if the teachers union did not get a raise this year, would the quality of teaching be any less.

Ms. Lautner stated of course not but the class sizes would be larger. There will not be the after school programs and the support in place for these children. The Township Committee should forego their salaries.

Mayor Lachawiec stated the Township Committee has not taken a raise in many years.

Shawn Denning Jr., 92 Morey Place Road, stated he is a major advocate for education, from Pre-K to the graduate level. Raising the taxes to give somebody else a raise is wrong. If the children's education is going to be diminished, then yes, raise the taxes. If the education will remained unharmed, then do not raise the taxes.

Maureen Tart, 4 Tall Oaks Drive, Special Education Teacher, stated the Supervisor and Instructional Systems of Special Education were cut. The children are no longer sent out of district, which saves \$30,000-\$70,000 per child. Now the town is asking to educate the special needs children when the district does not have the ways and means if the systems are taken away. There are safety concerns.

Mayor Lachawiec stated the Township Committee will use its best judgment and come up with a decision.

Chris Presti, 206 3rd Street, President of Families of Autistic Children, a lot of families moved to this town strictly for the special education program. Ms. Presti inquired if there are full positions being removed from the school district.

Mayor Lachawiec stated he cannot answer that question at this time. Mayor Lachawiec read a letter from Michael Grohl, Chair of Regional Family Support Planning, Council 6, Monmouth and Ocean Counties, regarding special education for special needs children.

Megan Hart, 99 Oregon Avenue, requested the board consider where and how cuts are made for the future. People with young families would love to stay in this district as long as the quality of education allows. Ms. Hart has been a special education teacher in the Middle School for eight years. In that time, the students from Waretown are in the higher-level classes.

Richard Atwood, 30 Walnut Street, stated the special education teachers taught his special needs child things no other school could. Mr. Atwood requested the board consider looking somewhere else for the monies needed.

Vince Anepete, 85 Clearwater Drive, requested everyone to look at both sides of this argument. The budget was defeated and the Township Committee was elected to represent the town. Allowing the school budget to stand would not do service to the people who elected the Township Committee. The special needs children are getting fantastic attention in town and are doing really well. Mr. Anepete is not arguing for or against but is requesting everyone to realize all the ramifications of this issue.

Kimberly Solimine, 7 South Olympia Drive, stated her special needs daughter has learned the basics of reading, writing and math at this school and requested the board accept the budget.

John Shuster, 94 Dollmore, stated his son attended summer school last year and is now on the honor roll and doing very well. Mr. Shuster is a mechanic for the NJ Dept. of Transportation and has two more furlough days to take.

Jennifer Delligatti, 73 Poplar Street, stated her son came into this school at an infantile level. He has made such progress. Ms. Delligati's son will be heartbroken when his teacher is not there in September.

Debbie Williams, 12 Maple Street, is proud of the Waretown schools. There has not been a full tax increase in four years. The schools and teachers are taking a cut. Asking the community to contribute a little bit is not unreasonable.

Michael Presti, 206 Third Street, stated special needs children need constant reinforcement, since there are no true medical solutions. Mr. Presti introduced his eleven year old daughter, Ellen. Ellen has grown to be an honor student with constant reinforcement. The children cannot be lumped into one classroom with only two teachers. The children will not grow.

John Stout, 16 Barbara Court, Southern Regional High School Special Education Teacher, stated a lot of people, who did not grow up in this area, are making decisions that take away from the children. Residents with a beautiful golf course are complaining about a \$40 tax increase.

Mayor Lachawiec inquired if the union at Southern Regional stepped up to the plate.

Mr. Stout stated the union is in a new contract and was not asked to open up anything. Mr. Stout is very proud to be from Waretown. Let's continue to make each other proud. Do the right thing and take care of the children.

Ms. Lautner stated everybody at Southern Regional got an increment. Ms. Lautner's teaching career started at Southern Regional and ended due to the budget crisis at that time.

Ms. Lautner would be making over \$20,000 more per year, if she stayed at Southern Regional. Comparing Waretown Schools to Southern Regional is like comparing oranges to apple.

Susan D'Alessandro, 108 Michigan Avenue, inquired why the Board of Education cannot specify the amounts cut as salaries or positions.

Mayor Lachawiec stated the Board of Education will answer questions as soon as they are given the floor.

Ms. D'Alessandro inquired what the Township Committee is doing to forge better relationships with the School Board and the town.

Mayor Lachawiec stated the Township Committee would like children interested in science and physics to assist the town in its quest to have a solar field at the landfill. That will help increase taxes to the town and school district.

Deputy Mayor Tredy made it a point to attend as many school board meetings as possible to develop a report between the School Board and Township Committee. The adjustments were made with full knowledge and agreement from the School Board.

Ms. D'Alessandro stated there are other cuts that could have been made outside of the box. The Township Committee is not thinking outside of the box.

Deputy Mayor Tredy stated the public has interesting, important questions. The School Board should step up to the plate and answer the questions for you.

Ms. D'Alessandro stated the \$10,000 NJ School Board Association Fees are not needed if teachers are losing jobs.

Rita Sweeney, President, Ocean Township School Board, stated the School Board dues are spent under the law. That is the law. The School Board has no say about that. This School Board has spent many hours to come up with a budget, which was voted on. The Board cut everything it could that would not effect the education of the child. The Board will go into executive session and determine where the cuts are going to be made.

Ms. D'Alessandro stated if the Township Committee is proposing to cut \$14,000 in custodial services, the township should help keep the schools clean.

Ms. Francine DiGiovanna, 5th Grade Teacher at Priff School, stated there was never a guarantee to any of the teachers that if the teachers agreed to a pay freeze, no one would lose their job. All the northern schoolteachers did not take a pay freeze and they are the ones making the big salaries.

Mayor Lachawiec inquired if there was a vote taken at the teachers union meeting.

Ms. DiGiovanna stated yes.

Joseph Petrone, 83 Tiller Drive, discussed the school budget vote was a loud and clear message. Waretown cannot afford anymore contracts of 4.5% increases year after year, regarding the school. Also discussed tax increases, contracts, Building Department revenues and Greenbriar Oceanaire.

Kathy Ebert, 235 Walter Horner Court, inquired about the senior housing at the Shop Rite project.

Mayor Lachawiec stated it is proposed. The developer did not receive the funding. The project is in limbo.

Ms. Ebert inquired if the senior housing goes through and does not have to pay taxes, will the seniors be allowed to vote on the school budget.

Township Attorney McGuckin stated under the township's affordable housing obligation, the township cannot require those residents to pay property taxes. The township has to enter into a pilot agreement with an affordable housing developer. Under the New Jersey COAH obligation, the township is required to provide so many units and has to permit a pilot program. The seniors are allowed to vote.

Mayor Lachawiec stated the seniors will be paying rent. The property owner will be paying in lieu of taxes to the township.

Township Attorney McGuckin stated the property owner will make a payment in lieu of taxes to the municipality under the state COAH regulations. It is a percentage of their annual income. Anyone who rents a house or apartment in town is permitted to vote.

Chris West, 18 Bayview Drive, one person from the township came to one of the members in council and was accused of extortion because they were encouraging a vote. That's ridiculous. These people will be back. The negative attitude is not right.

Penny Golinski, 135 Admiral Way, by not increasing the tax a little bit, the children are not getting a thorough and efficient education. This will not happen again. The people are united. It brought parents, teachers and board closer together. 41 votes is not a landslide.

Robin DeMonch, 3rd Grade Teacher at Elementary School, stated the teachers have been taking a beating in the press. The reading curriculum is about voting. A survey was sent home with the children asking parents to take their children to the polls. It was an educational opportunity. Please remember it is about the children.

Patty Gerety, 114 Barnegat Beach Drive, stated her children are with the special education department and apologizes that her children are costing other people more money than the typical child. Please think about the thorough and efficient education.

Stanley Anderson, 208 Maplewood Road, the Township Committee and the School Board are doing their best with limited amounts of money. The state cut down the money available. It is not easy.

MOTION TO CLOSE PUBLIC COMMENT moved by Committeewoman Wetter,
seconded by Deputy Mayor Tredy.

Roll Call: Wetter: Yes, Tredy: Yes, Lachawiec: Yes

Deputy Mayor Tredy stated there were many statements made tonight that were guesses. The School Board indicated acceptance of the adjustments and will continue to provide a thorough and efficient education for the children. Dr. Lommerin has created a Building Communities program. No one will be happy after tonight. That means there was a good compromise.

Mayor Lachawiec hoped that the budget passed and takes no pleasure in what is being done. It is a difficult thing to do, balance the educational needs of the district and maintain a stable tax rate. The state educators understand that is the minimum amount the tax levy could be to give the children a thorough and efficient education.

Committeewoman Wetter stated the Township Committee does have a heart and is not the bad guy and is trying to do the right thing by compromising.

8. RESOLUTION 2010-199

**RESOLUTION TO OCEAN COUNTY BOARD OF TAXATION CERTIFYING
GENERAL FUND TAX LEVY OF \$9,418,649**

MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION was moved by Committeewoman Wetter, seconded by Deputy Mayor Tredy.

ROLL CALL: WETTER X TREDY X LACHAWIEC X

Rita Sweeney, President, Ocean Township School Board, stated be it resolved by the Ocean Township Board of Education, following action taken by the Township of Ocean Committee on the 2010-2011 school year, is as follows: General Funds: \$16,838,319, Local Tax Levy: \$9,418,649, Special Revenue Funds: \$340,848, Debt Service Funds: \$717,725, Local Tax Levy for Debt Service: \$409,101, Total Budget Reduction: \$332,561

Motion of approval was moved by Jackie Von Schmidt, seconded by Rita Sweeney.
Roll Call: Mr. Court: Yes, Mr. Tomczuk: No, Mrs. Von Schmidt: Yes, Mrs. Sweeney: Yes
Joe Tomczuk stated the Township Committee stated several times tonight that the cuts implemented was a joint effort between the two floors. The board only has power when all are sitting together.

Resolved that the amount of district taxes needed to meet the obligations of this board for the 2010-2011 school year July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011 is \$9,419,649 for general funds and \$409,101 for debt service. The Township of Ocean is hereby requested to place in the hands of the Treasurer of School Money that amount within the next 12 months, beginning July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011 in accordance with the Township may adhere to as follows: please make 10 payments in the amount of \$941,854.90 and debt service in July of \$409,101.

Motion to approve was moved by Jackie Von Schmidt, seconded by Michael Court.

Roll Call: Mr. Court: Yes, Mr. Tomczuk: Abstain, Mrs. Von Schmidt: Yes, Mrs. Sweeney: Yes

Motion to adjourn moved by Jackie Von Schmidt, seconded by Michael Court.

9. MOTION TO ADJOURN was moved by Committeewoman Wetter, seconded by Deputy Mayor Tredy.

ROLL CALL: WETTER X TREDY X LACHAWIEC X

Signed and Submitted:

Diane B. Ambrosio, RMC
Township Clerk

Date